Cognitive Depth and Hybrid Warfare: Exploring the Nature of Unique Time, Space, and Logic Frames

A Monograph

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A shared understanding of what hybrid warfare is and how it relates to hybrid threats remains elusive. The concept of a hybrid threat has formally entered US Army doctrine, but doctrinal definitions and conceptualizations remain fixated on capabilities and tactics and lack context. Understanding hybrid warfare must also reflect an understanding of the unique strategic purpose and logic frames that emerge from the ideological, socio-political, and physical ecologies in which a hybrid threat exists. These ecologies create hybrid thinking and cognitive depth based upon this unique understanding. Therefore, understanding cognitive depth and visualizing hybrid threats as systems is a critically key aspect to understanding hybrid threats and their unique expressions of hybrid warfare. Hezbollah's performance in the Second Lebanon War primarily served as a primary example of a hybrid threat based largely on their irregular organization, conventional capabilities, and perceived efficacy against the Israeli Defense Forces. This is an incomplete interpretation, and it misses how Hezbollah's organization and capabilities were functions of an operational system informed by a unique and contextual hybrid strategy informed by unique time, space, and logic frames.

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Abstract

Cognitive Depth and Hybrid Warfare: Exploring the Nature of Unique Time, Space, and Logic Frames, by MAJ Jerrid K. Allen, US Army, 48 pages.

Over ten years have passed since the concept of hybrid warfare entered military and political discourse, and a shared understanding of what hybrid warfare is and how it relates to hybrid threats remains elusive. The concept of a hybrid threat has formally entered US Army doctrine, but doctrinal definitions and conceptualizations remain fixated on capabilities and tactics and lack context and explanation. Understanding hybrid warfare must also reflect an understanding of the unique strategic purpose and logic frames that emerge from the ideological, socio-political, and physical ecologies in which a hybrid threat exists. These ecologies likewise create a hybrid thinking and cognitive depth based upon this unique understanding. Therefore, understanding cognitive depth and visualizing hybrid threats as systems is a critically key aspect to understanding hybrid threats and their unique expressions of hybrid warfare.

To date, Hezbollah's performance in the Second Lebanon War primarily served as an often-cited example of a hybrid threat based largely on their irregular organization, conventional capabilities, and perceived efficacy against the Israeli Defense Forces. This is an incomplete interpretation, and it ignores how Hezbollah's organization and capabilities were functions of an operational system informed by a unique and contextual hybrid strategy. This monograph seeks to demonstrate how Hezbollah, as a hybrid threat, arranged its operational system on a cognitive and physical depth informed by unique time, space, and logic frames.

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Acknowledgment

Acronyms

ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
CONPLAN	Contingency Plan
CGS	Israeli Defense Forces Chief of General Staff
FM	Field Manual
HRC	Hezbollah Regional Command
GHQ	Israeli Defense Forces General Headquarters
IAF	Israeli Air Forces
IDF	Israeli Defense Forces
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
NMS	National Military Strategy
NORTHCOM	Israeli Defense Forces Northern Command
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
SLA	Southern Lebanese Army
TC	Training Circular
TRADOC	US Training and Doctrine Command
ULO	Unified Land Operations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
USMCR	US Marine Corps Reserves
USNI	US Naval Institute

Introduction

Positivist Western thinking follows a tradition of classifying and categorizing ideas, and seemingly unique trends continuously inspire new classifications, definitions, and theories. This is particularly evident in how the West makes sense of warfare. Although every war and conflict is inherently unique in its conduct and context, perceptions of new forms of warfare drive thinkers to break these forms apart and define them in relation to existing military discourse and knowledge of warfare. Unfortunately, this can produce sterile and clinical definitions that do not quite capture a true appreciation of what is occurring; however, this reflection and anticipation is still important. Carl von Clausewitz wrote *On War* from a desire to understand and grapple with developing a theory of war in the aftermath of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars that utterly defeated his native Prussia.[1] Though Clausewitz' trinity of war is an often-repeated abstract theory of phenomena applied to our state-centered paradigm of world politics, he also understood that the character of war is far more contextual in purpose and in practice:

> A more general and theoretical treatment of the subject [scale of military object and scale of effort] may become feasible if we consider the nature of states and societies as they are determined by their times and prevailing conditions…The semi-barbarous Tartars, the republics of antiquity, the feudal lords and trading cities of the Middle Ages, eighteenth-century kings and rulers and peoples of the nineteenth century—all conducted wars in their own particular way, using different methods and pursuing different aims.[2]

Ideas, ideologies, and identities create the logic of purpose for action and violence, be they nationalist, economic, religious, cultural, or an outcross of all of them. The challenge, then, is to be judicious in how we attempt to understand the infinite variations in the ways, times, and prevailing conditions of societies and states engaged in war.

Concepts such as asymmetrical war, irregular war, unconventional war, 4th generation warfare, new wars, and hybrid warfare are all attempts to account for how states and societies

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[1] Mark Calhoun, "Clausewitz and Jomini: Contrasting Intellectual Frameworks in Military Theory," *Army History* 80 (Summer 2011), 25.

[2] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Peter Paret and Michael Howard (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 586.

conduct war "in their own particular way." In the West, these ideas generally attempt to understand why modern states increasingly face complications attaining national political objectives through the use of military force. The rising tension between state, non-state, proto-state, transnational agents feature prominently in these ideas, particularly in the way these agents can frustrate modern states' ability to achieve decisive, unambiguous victories in discrete wars with clear beginnings and ends.

Hybrid war is among the more recent conceptualizations, but the discussion surrounding hybrid warfare still is a source of confusion and there is still no solid consensus on what it means. Simply stated, hybrid warfare identifies the blending of state and non-state military forces into an emerging threat that can resemble and act as both. Then Lieutenant General James Mattis and Lieutenant Colonel Frank Hoffman USMCR (Ret) discussed hybrid war in a paper published by the United States Naval Institutes' (USNI) *Proceedings Magazine* in November 2005. The article focused on the development of the 2006 United States Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), wherein they noted the Pentagon identified four emerging military threats characterized as traditional, irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive. The authors argued that future challengers to the United States would not discretely act within one of those four categories; rather, threats would develop custom approaches that selected methods and means drawn from the four emerging threats as a menu of options. This customization is what they called hybrid warfare.[3]

Less than a year following the publication of the article in *Proceedings Magazine*, the Second Lebanon War erupted between Israel and Hezbollah. The events of this war soon became the primary example of hybrid warfare and Hezbollah suddenly became the archetypal example of a hybrid threat. In this war, Hezbollah frustrated the Israeli Defense Forces' (IDF) ability to secure a traditional decisive victory in southern Lebanon through a novel use of technology, organization, and sophisticated capabilities not typically associated with irregular threats. The

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[3] James Mattis and Frank Hoffman, "Future Warfare: The Rise of Hybrid Wars," *United States Naval Institute: Proceedings Magazine*, vol 132, November 2005.

study of hybrid warfare with respect to the Second Lebanon War became focused on the

capabilities and behaviors hybrid threats demonstrated relative to the militaries of advanced

modern states, and conceptualizations followed a tactical understanding that is positivist in its

approach and inductive in reasoning. As such, hybrid warfare is expressed in how hybrid threats

can offset the advantages inherent in the operational and tactical military forms of modern states

by employing their own blend of conventional and irregular tactics and technological equipment.

There is value in conceptualizing hybrid warfare in terms of the means and methods

hybrid threats employ in war, but there is also value to be found in exploring the idea of hybrid

warfare as a method of strategic thought that produces unique forms of hybrid operations. It is

perhaps even more useful to think about hybrid warfare in ways that are not inherently

capabilities based and self-referential. There is more to learn about hybrid warfare when we avoid

using our own military capabilities and doctrine as a point of departure. In *Strategy and

Ethnocentrism*, author Ken Booth's warns against understanding threats in this way:

> Threat assessment is not concerned just with capabilities and intentions, but also with the
> ways in which capabilities and intentions are perceived and misperceived. Images are the
> source of politico-military behavior. Threat assessment is therefore seriously vulnerable to
> ethnocentric distortion.[4]

With Clausewitz and Booth in mind, a simple blending of military forms must not alone

define hybrid warfare. Understanding hybrid warfare must also reflect the unique strategic

purpose and logic frames that emerge from the ideological, socio-political, and physical ecologies

in which a hybrid threat exists. These ecologies, combined with particular value sets, likewise

create a hybrid thinking and cognitive depth based upon a unique understanding of time, space,

and purpose, which, in turn, create cognitive and moral asymmetries between adversary systems.

These asymmetries offer hybrid threats exploitation opportunities with relevant forms of power.

Therefore, understanding the cognitive dimension of depth is a critically key aspect in

understanding hybrid threats and their unique expressions of hybrid warfare.

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[4] Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers 1979), 17.

Current US military doctrine and thinking regarding hybrid warfare focuses primarily on hybrid threat capabilities, and does not readily reveal the cognitive depth of hybrid threats and the logic frames employed by them in hybrid warfare; however, doctrinal definitions of depth still serve as a working foundation to build understanding. Understanding depth, and, by extension, cognitive depth is facilitated by reviewing how Soviet operational theories during the interwar period first conceptualized spatial depth in warfare. The logic that led Soviet thinkers to imagine spatial depth in operations, and how it influenced their understanding of time and space, is useful in expanding the concept of depth cognitively. If hybrid threats are non-state, transnational, ideological, identity and morality based, it is important to understand a dimension of depth that transcends the physical and spatial to arrange relevant military operations in time and space against it.

Finally, the Second Lebanon War provides a familiar historical reference from which to rethink how Hezbollah is understood as a hybrid threat. Hezbollah did not transubstantiate into a hybrid threat on the eve of the Second Lebanon War; rather, its story as a hybrid began long before. Hezbollah's hybrid approach during the Second Lebanon War reveals a sophisticated arrangement of military operations that relied on both physical and cognitive depth informed by the moral asymmetries between Israel and Hezbollah which are all rooted in Hezbollah's very creation. In exploiting these asymmetries, Hezbollah's hybrid warfare forms induced a cognitive dislocation within the IDF that inhibited operational learning and reframing.

Genesis of the Hybrid Warfare Label

The current volume of discourse on hybrid warfare suggests the terminology is here to stay for some time. Hybrid warfare is now incorporated into US Army doctrine, and, despite the divergence in ideas regarding the meaning of hybrid warfare among academics, the implications of hybrid warfare/threats are more than an issue of simple semantics. It is incumbent upon military professionals to understand emerging trends and patterns in the strategic context and

apply that understanding through the operational art. Hybrid warfare is seemingly one such

emerging trend, and tactical conceptualizations of hybrid warfare embodied in the idea of hybrid

threats are important but incomplete. Operational art, as defined by the US Army, is the pursuit of

strategic objectives, in whole or in part, through the arrangement of tactical actions in time, space,

and purpose.[5] It follows that practitioners of operational art must mediate between strategy and

tactics, and therefore understand both the strategic and tactical implications of hybrid warfare for

both ourselves and our adversaries.

The concept of hybrid war came into vogue following the 2006 Mattis and Hoffman

article, and the idea would gain a greater audience as an explanation for the struggles that Israel

experienced against Hezbollah in the Second Lebanon War. This struggle is a central problem

Hoffman later tried to address in 2007 when he wrote *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of*

Hybrid Wars. He used Hezbollah as a prototype for a hybrid threat that, "clearly demonstrated the

ability…to study and deconstruct vulnerabilities of Western style militaries, and devise

appropriate countermeasures."[6]

As a research fellow in the Center for Emerging Threats and Opportunities at the Marine

Corps Combat Development Command, Hoffman later published a follow up article on hybrid

warfare in 2009 for *Joint Force Quarterly* to further socialize the concept. Hoffman proposed

hybrid warfare as a multi-modal form of war, a construct he generally summarized as:

> This construct is most frequently described as "hybrid warfare," in which the adversary
> will most likely present unique combinational or *hybrid* threats specifically targeting U.S.
> vulnerabilities. Instead of separate challengers with fundamentally different approaches
> (conventional, irregular, or terrorist), we can expect to face competitors who will employ
> *all* forms of war and tactics, perhaps simultaneously.[7]

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[5] Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), 2-1.

[6] Frank Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Warfare* (Arlington: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007), 8.

[7] Frank Hoffman, "Hybrid Warfare and Challenges," *Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 59, (1st Quarter 2009), 34-39.

Hoffman's formulation of the concept here offers two ways to look at hybrid warfare. The first and most obvious is that hybrid warfare occurs when any adversary employs multiple, pre-defined, forms of warfare (conventional, irregular, terrorist, or criminal). This understanding is the basis of understanding for most current US military doctrine. Second, Hoffman describes hybrid warfare as a unique combination that specifically targets vulnerabilities. He speaks of US vulnerabilities, but this naturally can be applied to the exploitation of vulnerabilities between any adversary or opposition systems. This part of the conceptualization allows for hybrid warfare to serve as basis for strategy, both emergent and deliberate, but a problem for the operational artist remains. This conceptualization only provides "what" (the tactical actions) a hybrid adversary might do to exploit vulnerabilities, but does not readily offer any insight towards understand the how and "why" (operations and strategy).

Hoffman, however, was not the first to coin the term hybrid war. His work drew upon an earlier research monograph by William J. Nemeth at the Naval Post-Graduate School. In "Future War and Chechnya: A Case for Hybrid War," Nemeth proposed a conceptualization of hybrid war through the hybrid societies that employ them. Hybrid societies, according to Nemeth, are devolving states that adopt or retain the features of modern state societies such as institutions and technology, and combine them with, among other ideas, more traditional pre-state norms of tribalism and religion.[8] Nemeth recognized that the hybrid militaries of such societies would reflect their social norms and that each hybrid society would be unique, and he grasped the necessity of understanding hybrid societies to counter them militarily. He states, "to effectively counter hybrid warfare an understanding of how the hybrid society is organized, thinks, and

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[8] William, Nemeth, *Future War and Chechnya: A Case for Hybrid Warfare* (Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School, June 2002) 2-3.

views western methods is essential, as is an understanding of how hybrid society employs modern institutions, theories, and the technology available."[9]

Nemeth draws distinct connections between social, political, and strategic aspects of hybrid warfare that are not as clearly outlined in Hoffman's writing; particularly the implied social constructions of hybrid war, and the role hybrid war plays in strategy. Hoffman does cite the importance of cultural understanding, but does not directly link this to a foundational understanding of hybrid warfare in unique circumstances as Nemeth does.[10] Yet, using Chechnya and the Chechnian Wars as an example of a hybrid society and hybrid wars, Nemeth's view limits the concept in terms of devolving or proto-states that blend pre-state and modern state norms. Conversely, Hoffman's assertion that modern states can also employ hybrid warfare is an important expansion of the concept that does not expressly follow from Nemeth's conceptualization. This is an especially salient point given that Russia's 2014 invasion and illegitimate annexation of Crimea is but one of the latest examples used to illustrate hybrid warfare.[11]

What Hoffman's and Nemeth's ideas regarding hybrid war hint at is something broader. Their ideas of hybrid warfare remind us of the inherent social constructions that underpin warfare in general: that it emerges from a confluence of ideas, institutions, social norms, and social understanding of power as well as a convergence of the means of warfare. Hybrid war is more than a multi-modal war or blending of military capabilities into an operational approach, and it is more than pre-state and non-state actors exploiting a Western paradigm for warfare. Devolving states do offer examples of socially constructed forms of war that stand in greatest contrast to our

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[9] Nemeth, 29.

[10] Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century*, 51.

[11] Michael Kofman and Matthew Rojansky, "A Closer Look at Russia's "Hybrid War," Wilson Center Kennan Cable Number 7, April 2015, accessed March 14, 2017, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/7-KENNAN%20CABLE-ROJANSKY%20KOFMAN.pdf.

own, but the mindset involved is not limited to devolving states. Hybrid thinking is a basis for strategy, and unique forms of hybrid warfare are derived from this thinking. This basis for strategy and how the strategy creates unique forms of hybrid warfare is not yet explicitly found in US Army doctrine.

How US Army Doctrine Makes Sense of Hybrid Warfare

In order to better understand the strategic and operational perspectives of hybrid warfare, it is necessary to identify current gaps in US Army doctrine. Current US Army doctrine does not directly define hybrid warfare, only hybrid threats. However, the definition the US Army adopts is highly compatible with Hoffman's view of the phenomena. The current US Army capstone doctrine, ADRP 3-0 Unified Land Operations, accepts the idea that hybrid threats are an aspect of the contemporary operational environment, and defines these threats as:

> The diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, terrorist forces, or criminal elements unified to achieve mutually benefitting threat effects.[12]

The doctrinal definition closely resembles one definition of hybrid war presented by Hoffman:

> Hybrid Wars incorporate a range of different modes of warfare including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion and criminal disorder.[13]

ADRP 3-0 elaborates on the concept by describing hybrid threats as a potential combination of traditional forces governed by law and unregulated forces that act without restriction, and highlights the possibility that hybrid threats can exist as a combination of state and non-state actors.[14] This formulation of a hybrid threat focuses on a combination of organization types, and implies a mixture of low-tech and high-tech equipment employed with

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[12] ADRP 3-0, 1-3.

[13] Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century*, 29.

[14] ADRP 3-0, 1-3.

both conventional and guerrilla tactics. It describes a hybrid threat's behavior and potential

capabilities, but provides no context or explanation.

ADRP 3-0 adopts its definition of a hybrid threat from US Army TC 7-100 *Hybrid Threat* published in 2010.[15] TC 7-100 offers US Army doctrine a much larger resource to consider hybrid threats, and presents the following expanded description:

> They can possess a wide range of old, adapted and advanced technologies—including the possibility of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). They can operate conventionally and unconventionally, employing adaptive and asymmetric combinations of traditional, irregular, and criminal tactics and using traditional military capabilities in old and new ways.[16]

TC 7-100 reinforces the recipe style tactical logic that is behind the doctrinal

understanding of hybrid threats. Per TC 7-100, hybrid threats are a combination of two or more

of the following components: military force, nation-state paramilitary force, insurgent groups,

guerrilla units, and criminal organizations.[17] This implies a vast potential for combination and

variation among what might be defined as a hybrid threat, but again, such a model is ultimately

devoid of a logic of purpose and strategic context. Conceptually, such a description also obscures

the notion that a hybrid threat represents a unique creation on its own. They are more than the

sum of their employed modes of warfare, and cannot necessarily be broken down into their

alleged sub-components.

Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Insurgency and Countering Insurgencies*, does not

employ the term hybrid warfare or hybrid threat, but does define irregular warfare as "a violent

struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant

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[15] US Army Training Circular (TC) 7-100, *Hybrid Threat* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), 1-1.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., 2-1.

population(s)."[18] Likewise, FM 3-24 describes the threats in an insurgency as being composed of

opportunists, criminal organizations, nongovernmental militias, all of which can use both

conventional and terrorist tactics, and engage in the proliferation of technology to irregular

forces.[19] These threats, interactions, and behaviors could be synthesized into an understanding of

a hybrid threat that resembles the ADRP 3-0 and TC 7-100 definitions, but that does not offer any

additional insights into the concept. On the contrary, the similar constructs found in FM 3-24 may

even confuse what is potentially unique about hybrid warfare beyond the understanding that

hybrid warfare consists of irregular forces that employ sophisticated organizations, tactics, and

technology.

Hybrid war is also featured in the 2015 National Military Strategy of the United States of

America (NMS). However, its shortcoming is that the official US strategic understanding of

hybrid war also seems to be largely drawn from the Hoffman and US Army TRADOC models of

hybrid warfare. In the 2015 NMS, hybrid war is conceptualized as conflict that exists within the

intersection of state and non-state conflict, and is only afforded meaning through its relation to

binary ideas of state and non-state, and conventional and irregular. The NMS predictably

describes hybrid conflict as a blending of conventional and irregular forces that may use

traditional and asymmetric military capabilities that seek to deny initiative, create ambiguity, and

paralyze adversaries.[20] What the NMS leaves us with is a general description that simplifies the

phenomenon of hybrid war as conflict where hybrid threats (blended state and non-state forces)

employ hybrid tactics (conventional and asymmetric capabilities) against an adversary. Hybrid

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[18] Field Manual (FM) 3-34, *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2008), 1-1.

[19] FM 3-24, chapter 5.

[20] *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America 2015* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2015), 4.

warfare is simply something hybrid threats do, it is a recursive definition that does not comment on a new or unique character of war.

Thus, it becomes necessary to seek a holistic view of hybrid war wherein the functions of hybrid threat tactics are informed by hybrid threat strategies and their relevant operational forms. In his experience with the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire, T.E. Lawrence once identified a false antithesis between strategy and tactics in his *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. Instead of functioning as separate elements or levels of war, he saw them as holistic points of view from which to reflect on the algebraic element of things, the biological element of lives, and the psychological element of ideas in war. T.E. Lawrence used this insight to understand what was different about the Arab revolt against the Turks. He appreciated what was unique about the Arabs, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Ottoman Turks. He reflected on the meaning men and material had relative to each adversary as well as the absurdity of limiting his understanding of the conflict in terms relative to the "conventional" wars being fought in Europe during World War I.[21] His reflection and learning allowed him to divorce the conflict of the Arab revolt from standard descriptions contemporary Western warfare, and imagine a war of detachment that dictated the tactics and methods used against the Ottoman Turks.

Everett Dolman similarly commented on a tension between strategy and tactics, in that strategy and tactics represented a kind of paradox where strategy aims for continuation while tactics seeks finality. Like T.E. Lawrence; Dolman also saw the imperative need to understand both tactical and strategic aspects of war in a holistic fashion. In Dolman's mind, "strategy and tactics are the yin and yang of military operations. The whole is incomprehensible without both and irreducible to one or the other."[22] To complete the circle of logic between tactics, operations,

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[21] T.E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph* (New York: Anchor Books 1991), 193-195.

[22] Everett Carl Dolman, "Seeking Strategy," in *Strategy Context and Adaptation from Archidamus to Airpower* ed. Richard Bailey, James Forsyth Jr., and Mark Yeisley (Washington DC: Naval Institute Press: 2016), 15.

strategy, culture and meaning, Ken Booth argues in *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* that it is the

mind, shaped by cultural and political ecologies, that provides logic and purpose to military

operations:

> War is a cultural phenomenon (some would say a cultural disease). Unless we attempt to understand the character of different cultures, it will be impossible to appreciate the mainsprings of national strategies. Without knowing about the 'pride, prestige or prejudice, moral outrage, insistence on survival, vanity and vengeance' of different societies, how can we begin to appreciate the roles which such important peoples as the Arabs, black and white Africans, Israelis and Vietnamese might play in contemporary and future military problems?[23]

These views demonstrate that hybrid warfare must be contextual, organic, and cultural. Strategic

purpose and logic frames are therefore socially constructed and provide relevance to the military

actions hybrid threats employ, the functions they serve, and the forms in which they are

expressed.

Collectively synthesizing the views of T.E. Lawrence, Everett Dolman, Ken Booth, along

with Clausewitz' observation that the nature of military objectives and effort are unique to time,

places, and societies, we can then understand that warfare is first and foremost cognitive.

Together these views also imply the potential existence of cultural, social, and moral asymmetries

between rivals in any given time and place. A hybrid threat employs a system of learning to

identify and take advantage of these asymmetries: they arrange themselves in time and space

throughout a depth that is cognitive as well as physical. Hybrid warfare therefore creates new

understandings of time and space to find advantage in conflict or war. As a learning system,

hybrid threats can and will impart their own meaning and value to disparate ideas, methods, and

technologies to create a new whole that imparts moral and physical advantage to them. As it

stands, US doctrine, and the ideas proposed by individuals like Hoffman, at best, offer a generic

military operational approach that results from the blending of conventional and irregular tactics.

Moving beyond the dichotomies of state/non-state and regular/irregular, hybrid warfare ought to

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[23] Booth, 144.

include how war and peace itself might be blended into an amorphous continuum, how social power structures are upended and transformed, and who and/or what people, ideologies, or organizations are considered enemies.

Cognitive Depth and Hybrid Warfare: Exploring Unique, Time-Space-Logic Frames

In contemporary military operations and doctrine, depth is primarily understood as a physical quality. ADRP 3-0 lists depth as one of the tenets of Unified Land Operations:

> Depth is the extension of operations in time, space, or purpose to achieve definitive results. Army leaders engage enemy forces throughout their depth, preventing the effective employment of reserves, command and control nodes, logistics, and other capabilities not in direct contact with friendly forces. Operations in depth can disrupt the enemy's decision cycle.[24]

This definition explicitly acknowledges the physical aspects of depth and only hints at the cognitive. Enemy forces, their reserves, logistics, and command and control nodes are commonly understood as physical, but they all may have elements of the cognitive and virtual. In Unified Land Operations, the cognitive dimension of depth may be inferred from the reference to "purpose" and the "decision cycle" of the enemy. Reference to the decision cycle of the enemy is an important acknowledgement of a cognitive element, but the implication is that the disruption of the decision cycle is achieved through physical engagements aimed at the destruction of enemy forces outside of contact or specific pre-defined nodes.[25] This definition also implies a globally shared view on how time, space, and purpose is perceived and utilized amongst adversaries within the context of a military conflict.

In the "Evolution of the Operational Art," Soviet Brigade Commander, G.S. Isserson reviewed the evolution of strategy and tactics since the time of Napoleon to describe the conceptual foundation of the Soviet strategy of deep battle. The central problem Soviet military

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[24] ADRP 3-0, 3-15.

[25] Ibid.

theorists faced in the 1920s and 1930s was how to think about future battle and future operations (a timeless problem if there ever was one) considering the recent World War and the Soviet Civil War. Isserson felt that "experience of recent wars, so rich with regards to tactics, still conceals the true nature of future operations," and that the "World War did not yield a single operation which could be considered an operational solution for the attainment of victory."[26] Isserson and his contemporary Soviet theorists were wise not to focus only on the experience of World War I, nor seek a solution for a specific war that was already consigned to history. Instead, the idea was to trace the evolution of the operational art through history and attempt to identify emerging trends relevant to the operational art.[27] They posed new questions instead of answering old, irrelevant ones. What the Soviets understood is that technology and socio-political contexts shaped how militaries conduct operations, and these factors had an impact on how to perceive time and space.

Isserson observed that rapid changes in technology following World War I focused on new tactical forms for the offensive, particularly through technological firepower that could overcome the defense. He observed that these developments are typically limited to the realm of tactics, and the nature of exercises and maneuvers during peace time preclude the ability to apply new tactical functions on an operational level, to say nothing of strategy.[28] Thus, operational thought lags tactical developments, and there is a tendency to apply new tactics and technology to dated operational thought. As Isserson traced the operational art from the era of the Napoleonic Wars he defined three general epochs of strategy. The first epoch he identified was the strategy of a single point, characterized by historic figures like Napoleon and Frederick the Great. All military mass was concentrated at a single point on a discrete battlefield at the right place and

[26] G.S. Isserson, "The Evolution of Operational Art," translated by Dr Bruce W. Menning (Moscow: The State Military Publishing House of the USSR People's Defense Commissariat 1937), 1.

[27] Ibid., 9.

[28] Ibid., 3-5.

time; decisive engagements were critical to victory. The strategy of a single point morphed into a linear strategy that Isserson attributed to wars in the second half of the nineteenth century such as the Franco-Prussian War. It was this epoch of linear strategy that Isserson and Soviet thinkers argued failed so profoundly in the context of World War I. The technological firepower that developed in the last half of the nineteenth century necessitated the dispersion of forces laterally and linearly. Frontal assaults in the face of such firepower required tactical maneuver that sought out flanks, and operated on exterior lines to attempt to envelop enemy forces. Prussian Chief of Staff, Helmuth von Moltke the Elder illustrated this when he wrote, "I am convinced that improvements in firearms have given the tactical defense a great advantage over the tactical offense," and later concluded the "best guarantee of success of an attack over the defense lies in a flanking attack and the simultaneous advance of all our forces against the enemy's flank and front." [29] The linear strategy became its own antithesis per Isserson. The size and lateral dispersion of armies in World War I led to a continuous front, and the linear strategy lost its ability to shock and destroy forces with tactical maneuver. Effectively, the military front simply became an advancing wall that was limited either by natural conditions or geographical boundaries of neighboring countries. [30]

Thus, the concept of spatial depth entered the theories of Soviet operational art. During the interwar period, Soviet thinkers identified that the complexity, size, lateral dispersion, and massive support areas to the rear of modern armies could prevent operational maneuvers of envelopment. The traditional maneuvers that brought shock during the epoch of linear strategy no longer applied in the context of the era, and militaries could not be defeated in decisive engagements. Large forces became distributed in a physical depth behind the front in the form of

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[29] Helmuth von Moltke, *Moltke on the Art of War: Selected Writings*, ed. and trans Daniel J. Hughes (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993), 57-59.

[30] Isserson, 27-29.

defensive belts, reserves, logistical elements, and nodes. By necessity, modern operations had to address this depth with a successive and uninterrupted series of combat efforts directed offensively through the depth of the enemy defensive system.[31]

Isserson's work transitions these theoretical insights on depth into a discourse on their practical application within the Soviet operational art of the time. What is important is not how the Soviets translated their understanding of depth into their doctrine of combined-arms echelonment, but, rather, how Isserson and the Soviets conceptualized the dimension of depth. By perceiving another dimension to the battlefield, depth provided a creative way to re-visualize the battlefield. It expanded time and space in such a way to fight an enemy military system holistically beyond a costly tactical slog along front lines. Isserson focused on applying depth to his own time, but noted that the context of "sociopolitical, economic, military, and industrial dimensions afford material for a definition of operations in future war. But these peculiarities cannot be construed as something permanent."[32]

As the Soviets conceptualized a new way to understand the physical operational depth of an adversary, it may likewise be necessary to understand an enemy's depth in ways that not only expand through the entire physical territorial space of the enemy, but into how an enemy perceives, constructs, and understands time and space. The identification of non-contiguous battle spaces in US military doctrine represents only the beginning.[33] A cognitive dimension of depth is not an absolute quantifiable element, nor does it imply a new feature of three-dimensional space on the battlefield. Cognitive depth represents the mental deconstructions and reconstructions of time, space, and purpose by one adversary system relative to another. Constructions of time, space, and purpose also rely upon understanding law, culture, institutions, populations and how

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[31] Isserson., 47-49.

[32] Ibid., 10.

[33] ADRP 3-0, 4-4.

they interact, constrain, or provide shelter to adversarial systems. Asymmetries that form between the relative understandings of time, space, and purpose will provide opportunities for exploitation. It is in this way that we can understand hybrid warfare as a way of thinking beyond the dichotomies of state and non-state, conventional and irregular capabilities, and their implied hierarchies. The constructions of time and space in hybrid warfare have further implications on borders and boundaries since borders themselves are cognitive and therefore subjective; moreover, hybrid war also can include the blending of war and peace into transitory periods of low intensity and high intensity conflict, or solidify into frozen conflicts.

These temporal and spatial ambiguities, moral asymmetries, and perceptions of self in time and space are of key importance because they are highly congruent with concepts of gray zones challenges. Gray zone security challenges are described as competitive interactions among and within state and non-state actors that fall between the traditional war and peace duality.[34] Gray zone security challenges are associated mostly with Russian operations in the Ukraine, and ISIS in Syria and Iraq. Yet just as hybrid warfare would be applied to Russia and ISIS, Hezbollah and the Second Lebanon War can also illustrate conflict in a gray zone. The challenge is understanding the unique character each conflict assumes, and how the conflict moves dynamically from one extreme to the other.

Hezbollah: The Poster Child of Hybrid War

Hezbollah emerged as the face of hybrid warfare and a quintessential example of a hybrid threat during the Second Lebanon War. While the analysis of hybrid war has since shifted to Russia's operations in Ukraine and ISIS in Syria and Iraq, the Second Lebanon War became a timely, real world example to illustrate the emerging topic of hybrid war in 2006. The observed tactics and operations of Hezbollah as well as their technological sophistication fit the tactical conceptual model of hybrid war, and the struggles Israel faced during the war, acted as a clarion

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[34] Philip Kapusta, "The Gray Zone," *Special Warfare* Vol 28 Issue 4, October-December 2015, 19.

call for US and other Western militaries take hybrid warfare seriously. The story of Hezbollah as

a hybrid threat began long before the Second Lebanon War in 2006, and the war itself also

represents but one chapter of a much longer conflict in southern Lebanon.

The Guiding Light of the Party of God

Civil wars provide opportunities to change power structures in a society, and new

arrangements of power invariably emerge. The start of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975 provided

such an opportunity to marginalized Lebanese Shiite minorities. Multiple Shiite organizations

such as Shiite cleric Musa al-Sadr's Amal, emerged early in the civil war to assert Shiite

economic and political power, but until 1982, these groups generally lacked a strong unifying

organization or purpose. Amal Shittie militias that al-Sadr founded were intended to resist Israel

as a part of the Lebanese army, but, following al-Sadr's disappearance in 1978, many Shiite lost

interest in the moderate policies of Amal successors towards Israel. This disaffection drove Amal

members into the ranks of other militant Shiite groups to include the Dawa Party of Lebanon.[35]

Thus, an enduring idea of resistance towards Israel became more central among Shiite groups in

addition to their will to power within Lebanon, but this resistance would require further

galvanization.

In 1982, the First Lebanon War began when Israel invaded Southern Lebanon following

the attempted Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) assassination of an Israeli ambassador in

London on June 3, 1982. The invasion was a follow up to the 1978 Operation Litani, which also

aimed to defeat the PLO insurgency in southern Lebanon following PLO involvement in the

Coastal Road Massacre the same year. The invasion ended with a UN ceasefire and the creation

of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), but did not successfully remove the

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[35] Matthew Levitt, *Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013), 21.

PLO.[36] Destroying the PLO's capacity to conduct an extensive guerrilla campaign against Israel from Lebanon was the primary aim of the 1982 war. Additionally, Israel sought the establishment of a pro-Israeli government in Lebanon in the wake of the civil war. Israeli operations in the 1982 war successfully drove the PLO out of Lebanon, and the IDF established a security zone in southern Lebanon. Operationally, the outcome of the war and the security zone occupation provided physical depth to Israel as it allowed the forward occupation of Lebanese territory which enabled the IDF to protect Israel from rocket attacks and cross border raids. Strategically, Israel forced PLO forces to withdraw from Lebanon, but a pro-Israeli Lebanese government was not realized.[37]

The physical operational depth afforded by the security zone in Lebanon conversely provided strategic opportunity and purpose to Iran and Syria. By this time, Iran had identified the defeat of the PLO in Lebanon as an opportunity to project its own Shiite revolution beyond its borders and establish conditions to fight against Israel. The Iranian Quds Forces worked through the Iranian embassies in Lebanon and Syria to bring Shiite groups together to establish a revolutionary movement within Lebanon. The Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IGRC) also sent advisers to establish a base in the Bekaa Valley to provide formal military training to the Shiite militias and to add teeth to a growing concept of resistance.[38] The blending of Lebanese Shiite disenfranchisement with the marginalization of Shiite communities globally, the withdrawal of the PLO from Lebanon, the Israeli occupation, and the ideology of the Iranian revolution all converged to provide the logic of purpose for Hezbollah. The logic created a new cognitive space and sense of purpose that existed simultaneously within and without physical

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[36] Helena Cobban, *The Palestinian Liberation Organization: People, Power, and Politics* (London Cambridge University Press, 1984). 95-96.

[37] Levitt, 22.

[38] Amos Harael and Avi Issacharoff, *34 Days: Israel, Hezbollah, and the War in Lebanon* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan 2008), 29-31.

borders in Lebanon. The struggle existed locally, regionally, and globally. This confluence of circumstances fed the hybridization of Hezbollah into a unique entity with its own unique approach to war. Hezbollah's purpose would be subordinated to and supported by external states, yet would also eventually act simultaneously as a part of a state and as its own state.

Hezbollah, translated from Arabic, means party of God. The full official name of the organization is Hizb Allah-Al-thawra Al-Lslamiya fi Lubnan, or the Islamic Revolution in Lebanon. In 1985, Hezbollah published an open letter where it first communicated its identity and objectives to the world. Hezbollah described itself not as a closed party in Lebanon, but an *umma,* or community*,* linked to Shiite Muslims worldwide. They warned that their military apparatus was not separate from their social fabric, and declared three primary objectives. Their first objective was to expel the Americans, the French, and their allies from Lebanon. Their second objective was to bring the Lebanese Phalangists, a Christian Democratic Party in Lebanon, to justice for collusion with Israel and others, and third to grant Shitte populations within Lebanon self-determination where they encourage the adoption of an Islamist state.[39]

This open letter established Hezbollah's central enmity against the West and Israel. It established a real enemy, a political purpose, and the militant means to pursue that purpose. These actions allowed Hezbollah to establish legitimacy among Lebanese Shiite communities relative to the beleaguered Lebanese central government and as an antagonist to Israel. It likewise allowed Hezbollah to tie its moral and logistical sustainment to state actors such as Syria and Iran. Hezbollah involvement in various attacks on US embassies, the high jacking of TWA flight 847, and suicide bombings against Israeli Defense Forces in southern Lebanon quickly earned Hezbollah the label of a terrorist organization, but they contained the potential to become more than a simple terrorist organization. The export of Iranian Islamic revolutionary ideology, the

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[39] Hezbollah, Open Letter, February 16, 1985, accessed March 30, 2017, http://www.cfr.org/terrorist-organizations-and-networks/open-letter-hizballah-program/p30967.

weak central Lebanese government, the Israeli occupation, material support from state sponsors, all provided the fertile soil in which Hezbollah grew into a hybrid threat. All that was required was the ability to learn and adapt with the dynamic social and political ecology of the Middle East.

Hezbollah's Continuous Reinvention and Relevance

The Ta'if Agreement set the structure for a post-civil war Lebanese central government in 1989. To re-establish the sovereignty of the Lebanese government over the country, the Ta'if Agreement called for the "the disbanding of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias…weapons shall be delivered to the State of Lebanon."[40] The requirements of the agreement therefore threatened to make Hezbollah irrelevant. Operating as a militia and revolutionary organization would erode the legitimacy of Hezbollah within the new political ecology of Lebanon and the broader Middle East.

To maintain relevance, Hezbollah had to undergo their own deconstruction and reconstruction of purpose. Initially, Hezbollah rebranded its image strictly as a resistance movement against Israel to semantically avoid the classification of a militia, and, given the relative weakness of the Lebanese army, the approach succeeded in allowing Hezbollah to maintain its arms and militant organizations.[41] This also granted Hezbollah a de facto authority to exercise the use of violence and act as a guarantor of civil security. Lebanon effectively abdicated, and in some ways sanctioned releasing, its state monopoly on the use of force. Furthermore, this preserved the recursive relationship between Israeli and Hezbollah. Israel remained in Southern Lebanon, in part, because of the threat posed by Hezbollah, and Hezbollah maintained its identity and purpose for resistance given the continued Israeli occupation.

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[40] Lebanon, Ta'if Agreement, November 4, 1989, accessed March 18, 2017, https://www.un.int/lebanon/sites/www.un.int/files/Lebanon/the_taif_agreement_english_version_.pdf.

[41] Harael and Issacharoff, 34.

Under the leadership of Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah took greater measures to integrate itself into the national fabric of post-civil war Lebanon. Instead of operating in defiance of the Ta'if Agreement as an armed militia that sought the overthrow of the Lebanese government in the name of the Islamic revolution, Hezbollah would participate in the legitimate government of Lebanon. In 1992 Hezbollah ran in the Lebanese general elections and won eight seats in the Lebanese parliament.[42] Hezbollah's participation in the elections would also be facilitated and advertised by their own media news outlet Al-Manar. Al-Manar would serve as an information conduit into mainstream Lebanese society, and as a reliable mechanism to communicate Hezbollah's new political identity and purpose.[43] In this way, Hezbollah maintained its central logic of resistance and martyrdom, yet redefined its identity and purpose in time and space. It blended its political and military purpose as part of the nationalist Lebanese state identity with that of the Islamic revolution, effectively hybridizing the social constructs of nationalism and religious ideology for Hezbollah and the Lebanese Shiite communities that supported it.

The 1990s also represented a period in which Hezbollah exhibited a phenomenal ability to learn, create and to evolve into a unique organization. Hezbollah had already built financial and military logistical depth into its symbiotic relationships with Iran and Syria, but Hezbollah further supplemented this depth with criminal and terrorist enterprises into South America, Southeast Asia, Africa, and North America. Hezbollah capitalized on disparate Lebanese and Shiite populations as leverage and access into these extraterritorial communities; an approach that nested with their 1985 open letter claiming solidarity with their global *umma*.

The 1990s also featured two major clashes with the IDF, Operations Accountability and Grapes of Wrath, in 1993 and 1996, respectively. These operations would prologue the conduct

[42] Dalal Saoud, "Hezbollah claims election win in Lebanon," *United Press International*, August 24, 1992, accessed March 13, 2017, http://www.upi.com/Archives/1992/08/24/Hezbollah-claims-election-win-in-Lebanon/9335714628800/.

[43] Avi Jorisch, *Beacon of Hatred: Inside Hizballahs Al-Manar Television* (Washington DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2004), 26.

of the Second Lebanon War, and they punctuated the broader Hezbollah and Israeli conflict with brief periods of higher intensity conflict. In both campaigns, the IDF engaged in stand-off air and artillery strikes against Hezbollah katushya rocket systems and Lebanese infrastructure. The operations attempted to disrupt Hezbollah and threaten to drive a large enough wedge between them and the Lebanese people to persuade the governments of Syria and Lebanon to actively curb the activities of Hezbollah against the IDF and the Israeli-allied Southern Lebanese Army.[44] For Hezbollah, the operations demonstrated the propensity of the IDF to utilize the IAF and stand-off firepower against them, and their reluctance to commit to large scale ground operations in the context of an attritional war within occupied Lebanon. Hezbollah also observed the impacts their harassing katushya fires had on the population of northern Israel. Hezbollah used these operations as learning opportunities to observe the IDF and orient their own unique opposition system against them.

Two Shocks to Hezbollah

In 2000, a crescendo of anti-war sentiment led Prime Minister Ehud Barak to end the occupation of southern Lebanon. The intent of the Israeli withdrawal was to end the long war of attrition in occupied Lebanon, undermine Hezbollah's logic of resistance, and encourage Syria to likewise withdraw from Lebanon. Syria also occupied portions of Lebanon since the Lebanese civil war. When Syria failed to withdraw, Barak continued to unilaterally withdraw Israel from southern Lebanon. In the Prime Minister's view, the 18-year occupation of Lebanon was a tragedy and the root of the overall conflict.[45] What was done could not be so easily undone however. Hezbollah and Nasrallah framed the withdrawal as an Israeli retreat and defeat; positive proof of the justice of the resistance. The occasion would serve as the backdrop for Nasrallah's

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[44] Avi Kober, *Israel's Wars of Attrition* (New York: Routledge, 2009), chapter 7.

[45] William A. Orme Jr. "Retreat from Lebanon: The Israelis; Barak Declares End to 'Tragedy' as Last Troops Leave Lebanon," *New York Times*, May 24, 2000, accessed March 29, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/13/world/middleeast/13mideast.html.

famous victory speech equating Israeli will and power with that of easily broken "spider webs."

Once again, Al-Manar would serve as the media mouthpiece for Hezbollah's declaration of

victory, but this time with a global reach due to the satellite broadcasting of the network.[46]

Although Hezbollah could justify past efforts through declarations of victory, the future of

Hezbollah became uncertain in wake of the withdrawal, and Hezbollah had to evolve and adapt

again.

Hezbollah continued to justify its struggle by sympathizing with the Palestinian struggle,

fighting for the release of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners captured during the occupation, and

pursuing Lebanese claims for the Sheeba Farms region. As a relic of the post-World War I French

Mandate, the border between Syria and Lebanon was not formally demarcated, and Lebanon

claimed ownership of the area. Israel maintained that the farms belonged to Syria, and included

the farms as part of their 1981 annexation of the Golan Heights. Despite UN acknowledgement

that the farms were south of Blue Line, the farms allowed Hezbollah and Lebanon to claim that

Israel failed to fully end their occupation of Lebanon, a claim Syria supported. The dispute over

a small patch of land was not sufficient itself to justify resistance, so Hezbollah began to rely

concurrently on abductions of citizens and infiltrations into Israeli Arab populations. In October

2000, Hezbollah orchestrated the kidnapping of Reserve Lieutenant Colonel Elhanan

Tannenbaum in an international plot, and abducted the bodies of three IDF soldiers patrolling

near Sheeba Farms on the Israeli side of the border to gain bargaining power required for their

approach. Thus, Hezbollah filled the operational space left by the IDF, and used it as an

opportunity to adjust its own operations relative to the changes in the region.[47] Al-Manar would

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[46] Jorisch, 28.

[47] Levitt, 232-233; Paul Singer, "Violence, threats build along Israel-Lebanon Border," *United Press International*, October 7, 2000, accessed March 30, 2017, http://www.upi.com/Archives/2000/10/07/Violence-threats-build-along-Israel-Lebanon-border/8140970891200/.

also shift the focus of its content from Lebanese issues to the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict to establish a new frame for the logic of resistance.[48]

These changes did not stand in isolation for long. In 2004 the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1559, calling once again for the removal of all non-Lebanese forces (Syria), and the disarmament of militias in the south (Hezbollah). Hezbollah denounced the resolution as meddling in Lebanese affairs, and maintained the stance that they were not a "militia." Syria likewise claimed they were not an occupying force. The true tension came with the assassination of former anti-Syrian Lebanese Prime Minister Rafic Hariri and the pro-democratic Lebanese Cedar Revolution that followed. The non-violent protests and government upheaval associated with the Cedar Revolution led to the withdrawal of Syrian occupation troops in April 2005, and the future legitimacy of Hezbollah came into question yet again; this time with the Cedar Revolution and the 14 March council asserting a true independence and self-determination for Lebanon free from all external influence. Unfortunately, the positive developments of the Cedar Revolution would be overshadowed by the escalation of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah.

Hezbollah in the Second Lebanon War: Logic of Resistance Reaffirmed

The Second Lebanon War offers insight into hybrid warfare beyond the efficacy of Hezbollah tactics against the armed forces of Israel. The notion that these 34 days eventually earned the label of a war after the ceasefire indicates confusion in holistically understanding the persistent, violent conflict between Hezbollah and Israel. Indeed, specific events do bookmark the beginning and end of the Second Lebanon War, but there was no true peace between Israel and Hezbollah prior to or after the war. This temporary transition in the character of the Hezbollah-Israeli conflict, and the cognitive unbalance it induced, is also a facet of hybrid warfare and its association with gray zone conflicts. Hezbollah's professional training and novel use of

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[48] Jorisch, 84.

technologically advanced weaponry supplied by Iran and Syria are but symptoms that became

acute during this period of the conflict.

The war started with the kidnapping of First Sergeant Ehud Goldwasser, and Sergeant

First Class Eldad Regev near the border village of Za'rit on July 12, 2006. Hezbollah operatives

infiltrated the border and attacked Goldwasser and Regev's IDF patrol while simultaneously

attacking multiple IDF positions with mortars and small arms along the border as a diversion.

Throughout 2005 and 2006, Nasrallah explicitly announced his intentions to kidnap IDF soldiers

for use in bargaining for Lebanese prisoners in Israel, relying again on the redefined purpose

following the 2000 withdrawal and territorial dispute over Shebaa Farms.[49] The approach

therefore illustrates Hezbollah's kidnaping tactic as more than a mere example of a hybrid threat

employing conventional military tactics in conjunction with terrorist tactics, it was a relevant

method that supported the purpose and operational logic of Hezbollah's resistance.

Punitive military actions by the IDF in response to the kidnapping would strengthen

Hezbollah's justification for maintaining their role as a militant organized resistance, especially

after the Cedar Revolution and the 2000 withdrawal. This also had the effect of exploiting the

moral and legal asymmetry between Israel and Hezbollah. Hezbollah could violate national

sovereignty to abduct an IDF soldier within Israel, but to retaliate, Israel would risk international

and domestic protest by reciprocating with any deployment of forces into Lebanon. As one Israeli

NORTHCOM officer would lament, "the fence in Lebanon was a barrier for us, not for them."[50]

Brigadier General (BG) Gal Hirsch likewise described the situation as an "immediately accessible

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[49] Krista Lee Weingrad, *Enduring Territorial Disputes: Strategies of Bargaining, Coercive Diplomacy, and Settlement* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 172.

[50] Harael and Issacharoff, 65.

enemy." [51] Hezbollah had the freedom of action to repeatedly attempt to kidnap IDF soldiers until they were eventually successful.

BG Gal Hirsch anticipated such abduction attempts by Hezbollah upon assuming command of the IDF 91st Division along the Israel-Lebanon border in 2005. BG Hirsch's understanding of the environment encouraged him to lead multiple planning efforts and tailor his divisional operational approach and priorities to stave off an abduction as long as possible; however, BG Hirsch felt an abduction was likely inevitable given the context of the threat and low priority for resources and manning along the border. The Israeli government adopted a containment approach to Hezbollah while it was preoccupied with threats in Gaza and the West Bank during the Second Intifada, and the IDF had relegated the security of the Israeli-Lebanese border to seventh overall, on par with the quiet southern Israeli-Jordanian border.[52] This should not imply that the Hezbollah-Israel conflict was dormant since the Hezbollah cross border raid and abduction in 2000. Between April 2005 and April 2006 alone, the 91st Division prevented five kidnapping attempts and engaged in fourteen other incidents that led to direct and indirect fire exchanges between Hezbollah and IDF.[53] The conflict was as alive as it had been since 1982.

This illustrates an asymmetry in operational and strategic focus of Israel and Hezbollah, and a possible side effect of perpetual gray zone conflicts. Hezbollah remained singularly focused on the concept of resistance, while Israel assumed risk with a containment approach towards Hezbollah that supported the overall prioritization of the Palestinian conflicts in Gaza and the West Bank. Simply put, participants in gray zone conflicts have different perspectives on the intensity and nature of the conflict in time and space. This asymmetry in operational focus

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[51] Gal Hirsch, *Defensive Shield: An Israeli Special Forces Commander on the Front Line of Counterterrorism* (Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing, 2016), 198.

[52] Harael and Issacharoff, 63.

[53] Hirsch, 204-205.

allowed Hezbollah to continue to learn and develop its own approaches relative to the Israelis, and gain a temporal advantage in preparing for a future conflict with Israel. BG Hirsch similarly observed that Hezbollah had the time and space to develop a defensive system that employed antitank and antiaircraft weapons to offset IDF advantages in firepower and maneuver. Hezbollah tied its logistical system into the local population and used them simultaneously as human shields. They created an operational depth both in the defense and in the offense with various weapons that could range Israel. The variety of rockets at Hezbollah's disposal created internal redundancy; while air forces could target long range rockets, 122-mm katusyha rockets required ground operations to neutralize. Hezbollah also employed a decentralized command and control of highly trained soldiers familiar with guerilla, urban, and light infantry tactics to offset the impacts of IAF strikes on command nodes demonstrated in the 1993 and 1996 operations.[54]

Shaping their forces in this way allowed Hezbollah to capitalize on Israeli reluctance to risk a re-occupation of Lebanon, and exploited the Post-Heroic warfare condition of Israeli aversion to war casualties and civilian deaths. Lebanese civilian deaths caused by Israeli operations in response to Hezbollah's provocations would serve to validate the purpose of Hezbollah as a national defender while simultaneously undermining Israeli support domestically and internationally, thereby creating moral hazard in which Hezbollah benefited from the risk placed on the civilian population they ostensibly existed to protect.

Despite the time Hezbollah spent preparing themselves in Lebanon, Israel did achieve surprise through the sheer magnitude of their response following the abduction of Goldwasser and Regev. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Defense Minister Amir Peretz, Chief of Staff Dan Halutz, along with the Israeli government ministers, approved Operation Specific Weight for an attack on the Hezbollah Fajr rocket layout, an advanced system of Iranian supplied long range missiles, as well as targeted attacks on the Beirut airport tarmac and the Beirut Damascus

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[54] Ibid, 197.

highway. The initial surprise was such that Hassan Nasrallah later admitted in a TV interview, "we did not think, even one percent, that the capture would lead to a war at this time and of this magnitude."[55] To Nasrallah, the intent was always to employ the tactic of kidnapping to bargain for Lebanese prisoners, not invite a retaliation on such a massive scale. The surprise was not limited to Hezbollah; however, there were indications that the Siniora government in Lebanon and segments of the Lebanese people initially blamed Hezbollah for the massive Israeli retaliation. They were blind-sided by the kidnapping and subsequent Israeli response, especially in the positive wake of the Cedar Revolution. Druze leader Walid Junbalatt openly questioned the motivations of Hezbollah, insinuating that Hezbollah was acting in the interest of Syria and Iran rather than Lebanon.[56] Internationally, the head of the Arab League Saudi Arabia condemned, "there is a difference between legitimate opposition and reckless adventurism."[57] The surprise Israeli response threatened to change the internal dynamics of Lebanon.

The initial surprise of Operation Specific Weight seemed to exploit the tension of Hezbollah's duality as a nationalist Lebanese defender and proxy force for Iran and Syria. It may have been in this brief window of time that Israel had the opportunity to disintegrate the very purpose of Hezbollah had the military response been more comprehensive and in line with Israeli contingency plans. Such a comprehensive response may have transformed the external surprise into a fundamental surprise regarding how Hezbollah viewed their own time space and purpose. But as Isserson criticized of World War I, tactical achievements were not turned into a decisive operational success. Internal tensions and constraints within the Israeli approach threatened to let the glimmer of opportunity created through action slip away.

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[55] Rory Mcarthy, "Hizbullah Leader: We regret the two kidnappings that led to war with Israel," *The Guardian*, August 27, 2006, accessed March 21, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/aug/28/syria.israel.

[56] Harael and Issacharoff, 98.

[57] Harael and Issacharoff, 102.

The reluctance to commit ground forces early, and the desire to focus on the air campaign created fragility in the Israeli approach however. From the outset of the war, BG Hirsch put pressure on NORTHCOM and the Israeli General Staff (GHQ) to authorize the mobilization of reserves and the execution of NORTHCOM contingency plans to counterattack into Lebanon against Hezbollah. Instead, during the first days of the war, the 91st Division had to make due with operations approved piecemeal that were limited in time and space to small offensive operations that limited cross-border actions. BG Hirsch understood that he and his division were at war, but NORTHCOM and the general staff remained invested in the air and sea campaign and would not commit ground forces yet.[58] In effect, the full pressure and friction that the 91st Division prepared to inflict on Hezbollah remained untapped during this critical window of time. Meanwhile, the initial basket of targets for the air campaign became exhausted, and with it the risk of a strategic miscalculation increased without a presence on the ground to observe and validate new targets.

On July 14th, two days after the start of the air campaign, Israeli ministers approved the decision expand the air campaign to target the Dahia quarter in southern Beirut. Dahia is the Shiite quarter of Beirut where Hezbollah locates their headquarters and Nasrallah has his private residence. The attacks would also target Al-Manar and silence the media outlet. Israeli ministers intended the attack to be a symbolic blow to the prestige and reputation of Hezbollah.[59] Instead, the attack presented Hezbollah with opportunity. Nasrallah publicly appeared on the Al-Manar to condemn the attack on Dahia, and demonstrate Hezbollah's ability to fight back and defend Beirut. Hezbollah launched a C-802 Iranian shore-to-ship missile that struck and disabled the Israeli Naval Ship Hanit and killed four Israeli sailors. The act served as a reaffirmation of Hezbollah's sincerity and status as a Lebanese guardian against Israeli oppression. Here again,

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[58] Hirsch, 246-249.

[59] Harael and Issacharoff, 100.

the significance of this event was not only that an organization like Hezbollah possessed and successfully employed a high-tech tactical shore-to-ship missile against the Israeli navy, but that its use functioned to support the operational logic and strategic purpose of the organization. The relevancy of the attack was not found in the ability of Hezbollah to defeat the Israeli navy, they had no such purpose or capability. The relevance came from their ability to resist and inflict sensitive casualties upon the IDF. Also, despite also being targeted in the Dahia bombings, the Hezbollah Al-Manar network maintained its broadcasting throughout the war with only short and temporary outages through redundant communications tied into satellite networks.[60] The failure to silence Al-Manar would serve as an ominous indicator of the relevancy of air power in this conflict.

The window of opportunity for Israel to exploit tensions between Hezbollah and Lebanon was closing, but not completely gone. On July 15, 2006, Lebanese President Siniora made a public speech where he called for a UN supported ceasefire, and signaled his willingness to deploy the Lebanese Army south of Litani River, and "…work to extend the state's authority over all its territories, in cooperation with the United Nations in south Lebanon." This could be interpreted as an oblique reference to Hezbollah, but Siniora simultaneously cast Lebanon as the victim from all sides, "…Israel has no right to destroy Lebanon. Lebanon cannot fulfill its role if it is the last to know what is happening, but the first to pay the price."[61] The situation began to develop rapidly and Israel and Hezbollah did not operate under the same conditions of time, and time was not in Israel's favor.

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[60] Harael and Issacharoff, 101.

[61] Roee Nahmias "Lebanon PM demands ceasefire, appeals for aid," *Y-Net News*, July 15, 2006, accessed March 22, 2017, http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3276174,00.html.

Hezbollah's System: Time, Space, and Asymmetric Definitions of Victory

Prime Minister Olmert's 17 July speech to the Israeli Knesset framed the Second

Lebanon War in a way that created an asymmetry in the strategic objectives and the ability to

claim victory in the aftermath of the war. Olmert sought a UN Security Council resolution that

directed the deployment of the Lebanese Army south Litani River supported by an empowered

UNIFIL, and provide international assistance for Lebanon to comply with UN Resolution 1559 to

disarm Hezbollah.[62] In the speech, Olmert also demanded the unconditional return of Goldwasser

and Regev.[63] These aims presented a difficult set of objectives for the IDF to achieve through the

course of their military operations. Alternatively, in an interview with Al-Jazeera on July 22,

2006, Hassan Nasrallah presented his view of how Hezbollah would achieve victory in Lebanon:

> Victory here does not mean that I will enter and capture northern Palestine and liberate
> Nahariya, Haifa, and Tiberias…The victory we are talking about is that when the resistance
> survives. When its will is not broken then this is victory. When Lebanon is not humiliated
> and its dignity and honor are maintained, and when Lebanon stands fast alone in front of
> the fiercest military power and does not accept any humiliating conditions regarding a
> settlement of the issue, then this is victory. When we are not defeated militarily then this
> is victory. [64]

Nasrallah went on to explain that Goldwasser and Regev would not be returned without an

indirectly negotiated prisoner swap, and the imposition of any UN resolutions were as irrelevant

to Hezbollah now as they had been during the Ta'if Accords and UNSCR 1559. The ability to

simply survive militarily and deny the return of Goldwasser and Regev would cast doubt on any

perceptions of Israeli victory after the war. Surviving an attack by the strongest military in the

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[62] Harael and Issacharoff, 94-95.

[63] Ehud Olmert, "Address by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert – The Knesset," Prime Minister's address to the Knesset, Jerusalem, July 17 2006, accessed March 22, 2017, https://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/olmertspeech2006_eng.htm.

[64] Hassan Nasrallah, interview by Beirut Bureau Chief Ghassan Bin-Jiddu, Al-Jazeera TV, July 20, 2006, accessed March 30, 2017, http://www.globalresearch.ca/interview-with-hezbollah-secretary-general-hasan-nasrallah/2790.

Middle East, a military that defeated multiple invasions by Arab coalitions throughout its history, would change how the world understood the balance of power in the region. Thus, an asymmetry of victory conditions emerged which would ultimately serve the continuation of the overall Hezbollah-Israel conflict after the war terminated.

Nasrallah's interview touches again on the constructed relationship between Hezbollah and Lebanon that is unified by a purpose of resistance. It continues to underpin the forms and function of Hezbollah's military actions and their purpose. Nasrallah explained that Hezbollah was not concerned with Israeli Air Force or Navy, they were irrelevant. Their physical power had limited meaning. He demurred that neither he nor Hezbollah claimed to be able to shoot down F-16s, but that air forces still failed in the face of "the military structure" of the resistance, and failed to halt the rocket attacks.[65] As noted, the IAF also failed to silence Hezbollah's media and television network Al-Manar. At the time of the interview, Israel had yet to authorize a large ground attack into Lebanon, but Nasrallah's comments offer insight into Hezbollah's perception of time and space and the propensity of events at this phase of the Second Lebanon War.

In the July 22nd interview, Nasrallah noted Israel had done everything it could do short of an extensive ground incursion. Such an invasion was the next logical step lest Israel opted to maintain a status quo or decrease military operations without achieving political resolution. Nasrallah understood the options Israel had, and, as result, any Israeli ground campaign could no long achieve any operational surprise in the way the initial air campaign did. Ground operations would extend IDF operations in time and space into Lebanon, and he knew from experience that the passage of time reduced the solidarity of the Israeli people and government:

> They [the Israelis] are wagering on seeing the country's political situation break up and weaken, and on seeing a decline in the popular support for the resistance in order to achieve political results. We, on the other hand, are wagering on our steadfastness and that of our people, and on seeing a decline in the Israeli internal support for the military operation and

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[65] Hassan Nasrallah, interview by Beirut Bureau Chief Ghassan Bin-Jiddu.

on the pressures on the enemy's government, the beginning of which we began to see today.[66]

Time became a variable that Hezbollah could use in its defensive system against the IDF. Nasrallah also described Hezbollah's rocket systems as a deterrent to aid in the resistance, but conceded that firing the rockets into Israel could not inflict a reciprocal amount of destructive power against Israel. The disparity in physical power here, too, was irrelevant. As a deterrent, the rocket attacks further exploited the time constraints inherent in the maintenance of Israeli political and national will, and served as a very visible and understandable demonstration of successful resistance. As Nasrallah stated, "there are two million Israelis who are either in shelters or outside the area, displaced outside the area. The entire economy in the north is brought to a halt. The factories, trade, tourism, and economic movement are all brought to a halt."[67] What Nasrallah described was not, in reality, an existential threat to Israel in the sense of destroying Israel or their economy, but it was an existential threat to the Israeli way of life they expected and became accustomed to as an advanced liberal democracy.

The purpose of resistance informed the operational logic of Hezbollah Regional Command (HRC) system and rocket array. Retaining ground and villages in southern Lebanon in time and space was not particularly critical to the purpose of Hezbollah's logic and purpose. Nasrallah explained:

> We are not a classic army extending from the sea to Mount Hermon. We are a popular and serious resistance movement that is present in many areas and axes. They might be able to enter a certain point or a village or conduct a large-scale ground operation. They might enter a mountain or a frontline village and claim a historical victory. In order not to say that Hezbollah made a pledged, I did not promise one day something like that or say that…our equation and principles are the following: When the Israelis enter, they must pay dearly in terms of their tanks, officers, soldiers.[68]

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[66] Ibid.

[67] Hassan Nasrallah, interview by Beirut Bureau Chief Ghassan Bin-Jiddu.

[68] Ibid.

From this, Hezbollah's operational form begins to emerge based on their understanding of time, space, and purpose. To maintain the deterrent rocket array of the resistance, Hezbollah required an integrated defense system that could maintain "at-will" rocket fires on northern Israel, and mitigate disruption from standoff IDF artillery fires and airpower. If a ground war came, the defensive system would protect the rocket array and inflict maximum possible casualties on a casualty adverse adversary to disrupt Israeli operational tempo, inhibit operational learning, and impose a cognitive dislocation between Israeli strategic/operational aims and Israeli tactical actions.

This operational logic dictated the functions that Hezbollah tactics and capabilities served, and would eventually earn Hezbollah the title of a hybrid threat. Syrian long-range Zelzial rockets, Iranian mid/long-range Fajr-3 and Fajr-5 rockets, and thousands of short range 122mm Katushya's created a diverse and deep array of rockets to attack deep into Israel and disrupt the Israeli way of life from distances well north of the Litani River. Anticipating Israeli reliance on IAF and standoff firepower, Hezbollah decentralized command structures and employed high-tech and redundant communications to reduced vulnerabilities. Supplied by Syria and Iran, Hezbollah accumulated large stockpiles of rockets and positioned them in southern Lebanon following the 2000 withdrawal to reduce reliance of logistical lines of communication during tactical fighting, while Hezbollah's operational and strategic logistics remained rooted extraterritorially in Syria and Iran; locations that were otherwise not overtly accessible to IDF military operations. Hezbollah took advantage of the vacuum left in southern Lebanon to harden their positions and build an extensive network of tunnels, bunkers, and outposts dubbed "nature reserves" in and among the Shiite communities south of the Litani. These "nature reserves" functioned as bases to launch rockets against Israel, defend individual arrays, dominate avenues of approach, and maximize casualties inflicted on the IDF. Furthermore, Hezbollah employed mines and IEDs to further disrupt IDF maneuvers and inflict more casualties, having observed the success of such tactics against US forces fighting in Iraq. Hezbollah's framing of time and space

allowed them to divest with traditional basing considerations and traditional lines of
communication that would be vulnerable to the Israeli operational forms employed in Operation
Accountability and Operation Grapes of Wrath.[69]

Sophisticated training on light infantry tactics gave Hezbollah the mobility to fight in a
way divorced from holding specific villages, outposts, or towns as Nasrallah described. The hilly,
rocky terrain of southern Lebanon would limit the maneuverability of large armored formations
while being little or no major impedance to infantry forces. Iran and Syria supplied and trained
Hezbollah on the employment of AT-14 Kornet, Sagger AT-3, Spigot AT-4, and TOW anti-tank
missiles as casualty producing weapons to ensure the IDF "paid dearly" not only in tanks but
soldiers and officers. Under this operational logic, Hezbollah tactically employed anti-tank
weapons not only against Merkava tanks, but also against buildings occupied by IDF soldiers to
inflict high casualties.[70] In pursuit of their operation logic, Hezbollah thus tactically improvised
the use of their highly advanced anti-tank missiles to employ them against any and all targets that
would produce Israeli casualties including buildings, personnel, and vehicles.

Hezbollah created a unique defensive/resistance system that relied simultaneously on
small unit guerilla and light infantry tactics in urban areas while also leveraging a dispersed
system of fortified strong points (nature reserves) that protected rocket arrays and controlled
avenues of approach in southern Lebanon. The purpose of the system again was not to retain
territory in Lebanon; Hezbollah's visualization of time and space did not require it. Knowing that
Israel did not have an appetite for reoccupying "Lebanese mud" after the 18-year occupation, the
tactical tasks were not directed towards the outright operational defeat of the IDF and retention of
terrain. Hezbollah also did not establish its resistance to set conditions for an offensive into Israel,

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[69] Andrew Exum, "Hizballah at War: A Military Assessment," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, Policy Focus #63, November 2006, 9-12.

[70] Hanan Greenberg, "15 Reservists Killed in Lebanon Battles," *Y-Net News*, August 10, 2006, accessed March 23, 2017, http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3288870,00.html.

they merely aimed for the exhaustion of the IDF and Israeli will, and the ability to disrupt Israeli task and purpose through imposition of doubt caused by unacceptable casualties.

Cognitive Dislocation of the IDF in the Second Lebanon War

The Winograd Commission and countless academic and military professionals have studied and analyzed the operational performance of the IDF during the Second Lebanon War. It is not the purpose of this paper to rehash assessments and evaluations of IDF tactical training, IDF doctrine, or Israeli budgetary decisions or defense policy. However, the story of the Second Lebanon War does offer the opportunity to explore the idea of how the nature of hybrid threats and warfare may cause a cognitive dislocation in adversaries. Dislocation, as defined here, is one of four defeat mechanisms in US Army Doctrine. As with the doctrinal definition of depth, dislocation largely refers to the physical and spatial aspects of conflict where physical forces are arranged in a position of advantage that compromises the value of the enemy position or makes it irrelevant.[71] If, like depth, we imagine dislocation in cognitive terms, we might understand cognitive dislocation in terms of the contextual irrelevancy of task and purpose, and an inability to reframe operations and learn.

The experience of the 91st Division with relation to NORTHCOM and General Headquarters Staff (GHQ) displays such a systemic cognitive dislocation of task and purpose within the IDF through the war. The 91st division commander, BG Hirsch, worked to align the purpose of his organization, and his subordinate organizations with that of NORTHCOM and GHQ. He struggled with transitioning the minds of both his subordinate organizations and his superiors into a war mentality. The abduction incident, followed by the loss of a Merkava tank crew to a Hezbollah and sustained direct and indirect fires throughout his sector convinced BG Hirsch that war, in the full sense of the idea, was upon Israel and the IDF.[72] Yet BG Hirsch's

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[71] ADRP 3-0, 2-3.

[72] Hirsch, 24.

initial consultations with NORTHCOM and the CGS showed they did share his view of the unfolding war. They denied BG Hirsch's requests to execute ground operations and call upon reserves in accordance with the existing contingency plans.[73] It was not BG Hirsch's intent to blindly execute contingency plans in a rigid way; however, he also understood that the action created by a counter attack would induce friction into Hezbollah's operations and provide an opportunity for learning in action. Learning that would provide the knowledge to dismantle Hezbollah and reduce rocket attacks, but he first need the approval and resources act.[74] The initial apparent successes from air strikes on the long-range rocket array and on the Dahia quarter, combined with an exaggerated caution following initial IDF casualties, tempered any desire from GHQ for a sustained ground operation.[75] This confined their approach to dated forms that no longer applied to the context of the war against Hezbollah in 2006.

Magen Ha'aretz Timrun Acher, "Defender of the Land," was the IDF CONPLAN for operations in Lebanon. Through exercises that prophetically simulated an escalation to war following an abduction, training events, and changes in the strategic context such as Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon, BG Hirsch assisted in updating the NORTHCOM CONPLANs to ensure relevancy of task and purpose should war come.[76] The plan did not resemble a classic blitzkrieg style maneuver against Hezbollah and the armored formations of Syria, but rather a multi-directional multi-dimensional, decentralized combined arms fight in high friction against Hezbollah's operational capability.[77] Unfortunately, these efforts would not be fully realized. The commander of NORTHCOM, Major General Udi Adam, would later tell the Winograd

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[73] Ibid., 243.

[74] Ibid., 244-245.

[75] Harael and Issacharoff, 124.

[76] Hirsch, 230-237.

[77] Ibid., 238.

Commission that CGS Halutz discarded existing CONPLANs, to include "Defender of the Land," and create new plans focusing primarily on an air campaign without NORTHCOMs input or awareness; moreover, with no effort to solicit the feedback of the 91st Division directly engaged with Hezbollah.[78] Halutz was convinced that casualties in ground maneuvers would not be acceptable to the Israeli people, and a call up of significant reserve forces would be too disruptive to daily life and the economy.[79] Ultimately the GHQs initial plans would resemble the same approach used during Operation Accountability and Operation Grapes of Wrath, utilizing the IAF and IDF artillery to bring about an international response and political resolution. This approach would prove irrelevant as it failed to acknowledge Hezbollah's evolution or that the IDF no longer occupied forward positions inside Lebanon.

These disconnects in operational vision, shared understanding, and unity of effort, fed by the shock of IDF casualties threatened to obscure understanding of the conflict. In turn, this also threatened to make IDF action irrelevant as the war developed. BG Hirsch would lament:

> All eyes were on the air strikes and the naval blockade of Lebanese ports. It was disheartening to see the cloud of the kidnapping incident still hanging over NORTHCOM. It was painful series of events – kidnapped soldiers, KIAs, and an exploded tank – but in spite of the fact that we had trained and discussed incidents such as these on numerous occasions prior to their actual occurrence, when they did happen, they had a paralyzing effect.[80]

BG Hirsch also observed a mentality that equated ongoing ground operations as routine daily missions, and such missions carried far more conservative risk considerations and expectations than the war he observed. These expectations would compound in the first ground battles of Maroun al-Ras and Bint Jbeil, and would further resonate through the conduct of the war. During Maroun al-Ras, an intelligence blunder between Israeli Defense Intelligence (IDI) and

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[78] Harael and Issacharoff, 127.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Hirsch, 246.

NORTHCOM failed to communicate the location of a Hezbollah "nature reserve" prior to commencing operations. This omission led to an elite IDF Maglan force unknowingly entering the reserve and sustaining two KIA.[81] While the Maglan force ultimately prevailed in Maroun al-Ras, the event further perpetuated negative perceptions of the conduct of ground operations through the IDF and the media. The intensity of the fighting and the associated casualties did not square with how GHQ and NORTHCOM understood the conflict. The 91st Division, being the first formation engaged in ground combat described this phenomenon, "for the first time, concepts perception, plans, doctrine, weaponry, and training all collide with reality and with the rival...friction created during the first battle strongly impacts the entire campaign."[82]

Taken together, these initial events and disconnects delayed the ability of the IDF to fully function as a learning organization. Learning allows organizations to understand what is different about a situation, reframe understanding, and create new operational forms instead of resorting to obsolete approaches. During the first weeks of the Second Lebanon War, learning was limited to the lowest tactical-operational levels within the 91st division and did not sufficiently promulgate through the operational and strategic levels in NORTHCOM and GHQ until late into the war, when a looming ceasefire threatened to prematurely bookend the final ground maneuvers of the IDF. From their operational vantage, BG Hirsch and his staff described the learning and adjustment that were taking place at their level:

> The battles at Maroun al-Ras and Shaked were significant as the first battles during this war. The 91st Division was the first to learn and the first to teach…because all the divisions that joined the fight came through us to be allocated a sector, they also received briefings as to what we had already learned.[83]

The 91st division would do what they could to shape the battlefield from their level and influence the conduct of operations. Unfortunately, NORTHCOM and GHQs reactions to the first battles

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[81] Harael and Issacharoff, 132, Hirsch, 254-255.

[82] Hirsch, 273.

[83] Ibid.

would create a condition that BG Hirsch described as "demoralized by victory" since the IDF could not make their successes on the ground against Hezbollah relevant due the lack of shared understanding of the conflict and the casualties being inflicted upon the IDF.

Hezbollah's operational efficacy did not directly create this sense of demoralization and failure by defeating the IDF in battle, but rather indirectly by causing the IDF to believe they failed to meet their own expectations and high standards of military effectiveness. The nature of the perpetual gray zone conflict caused multiple levels of the IDF to retain the perception that the ground missions were still "routine security," and most military and civilian leaders did not fully appreciate or acknowledge the shift in the intensity of the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict that took place. As the perception of "routine security" persisted throughout the IDF, an idea that it is better to win 1:0 than 3:1 (better to kill one Hezbollah terrorist and lose no soldiers than kill three Hezbollah and lose one soldier) also burdened the higher command levels of the IDF.[84] Therefore, when the 91st Division began taking casualties at Maroun al-Ras and Bint Jbiel, and the fighting did not fit the mold of "routine security," the IDF began to lose confidence in their own efficacy and their ability to succeed on the battlefield in the way they expected.

This doubt and loss of confidence only perpetuated the reliance on IAF operations throughout the first critical weeks of the war while ground operations remained limited to raids and smaller maneuvers near the Lebanon border. This primary reliance on the IAF helped create the conditions that led to the tragic Qana airstrike in Lebanon, in which 28 civilians, to include 17 children, were killed in an IAF airstrike. The event revealed the fragility of reliance on IAF operations, and the tragedy provided Nasrallah and Hezbollah with the opportunity avoid an international agreement that would jeopardize Hezbollah's future as the international community became more critical of Israeli actions.[85] The event also illustrated the irrelevancy of the IAF

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[84] Hirsch, 311.

[85] Harael and Issacharoff, 167.

attacks against Hezbollah command and control and rocket layout. Israel declared a unilateral

two-day halt to airstrikes following the Qana attack to allow for civilians to leave the area and aid

organizations to provide relief. In response, Hezbollah also observed a two day pause in rocket

attacks on Israel.[86] With full discipline throughout Hezbollah's organization, the rocket attacks

ceased, and after two days elapsed, Hezbollah immediately fired nearly 250 katyushas into Israel.

Hezbollah clearly demonstrated they still maintained full control of their forces and could halt

and begin operations at will despite two weeks of punishing airstrikes by the IAF.[87]

The decision to finally commit to a full ground offensive came on August 9, 2006 when

the CGS Halutz presented Operation Change of Direction 11 to Prime Minister Olmert and the

Israeli Cabinet. In presenting the plan to the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Halutz declared, "we've

reached the point where we have to make a large-scale military effort…this maneuver cannot be

measured by the sole question: how many casualties will it entail."[88] It took nearly four weeks for

this consensus on the new reality of the nature of the war to permeate through all levels. By this

time, however, the task and purpose of the operation would only make sense or be relevant if the

imminent ceasefire under UNSCR 1701 somehow collapsed, or if Hezbollah failed to honor the

ceasefire once approved. Such considerations faced intense skepticism and doubt following the

war. In light of the UNSCR 1701 passing on August 11, 2006 and Hezbollah's acquiescence to

the ceasefire on August 14, 2006, Operation Change of Direction 11 seems to have been too

little,too late for the IDF. Regardless of the likelihood of a failed ceasefire, by August 11, 2006,

the IDF had only 60 hours to seize key positions in southern Lebanon and along the Litani River.

The IDF maneuvers detailed in "Defender of the Land," and the types of operations advocated by

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[86] Edward Cody, Johnathan Finer, "Israel Moves to Suspend Air Attacks for Two Days After Strike in Lebanese Village Kills 57 Civilians," *Washington Post*, July 31, 2006, accessed March 13, 2017, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/30/AR2006073000093_2.html.

[87] Harael and Issacharoff, 172.

[88] Harael and Issacharoff, 195.

BG Hirsch four weeks earlier, were now reduced to a window of 60 hours. Hezbollah, meanwhile, still only had to survive three more days.

The nature of the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict, and the failure to perceive what was different in the Second Lebanon War, led to a cognitive dislocation within the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of the IDF. The inability to understand the operations as something more than routine security against a guerilla organization, the specter of returning to the Lebanese mud, and sustained IDF casualties all sowed the seeds of doubt when the 91st Division began to conduct high intensity operations. The routine security operational frame that initially existed in NORTHCOM and GHQ led them to believe actions on the ground by the 91st Division were poorly executed and hasty when in reality they reflected the true high intensity nature of the Second Lebanon War. This coupled with the initial IAF success against the long-range rocket array encouraged GHQ to pursue the IAF air campaign with a task and purpose ultimately irrelevant to Hezbollah's purpose and operational logic. The self-doubt suffered by the IDF delayed the acknowledgement and understanding of a new operational reality until after tragedy struck during the Qana airstrikes, and Hezbollah proved its ability to still function as a coherent system. Finally, by the time GHQ themselves understood and subsequently convinced the Israeli government about the true nature of the Second Lebanon War, the IDF had a mere 60 hours to conduct operations to hedge any possible failures of the UNSCR ceasefire that was already on its way to approval and implementation; operations that lost much of their potential relevancy through a shrinking window of both time and space.

Conclusion

Soon after the implementation of the UNSCR 1701 ceasefire and the IDF withdrawal, Nasrallah predictably declared the conclusion of the Second Lebanon War as a "divine victory"

for Hezbollah, and that "no army in the world is strong enough to disarm us."[89] Hezbollah had indeed survived another day, and Israel subjected itself to intense scrutinization and investigation regarding the conduct of the war under the Winograd Commission. The Lebanese Army and UNIFIL soldiers moved into southern Lebanon, but Hezbollah retained the ways and means of violence. Nearly two years passed before Hezbollah returned the kidnapped bodies of Regev and Goldwasser to Israeli in a negotiated prisoner swap, a condition Hezbollah also made good on. Over ten years after the Second Lebanon War the outcome of the war remains ambiguous, and the conflict between Hezbollah and Israel is by no means over. Hezbollah continues to evolve and learn as it has since its 1982 founding, and this ought to provoke more questions about how Hezbollah continuously redefines themselves in time and space. Hezbollah has since proven it has an expeditionary capability to project combat forces in support of the Assad regime in the Syrian Civil War, and there are indications of growing cooperation and ties between Hezbollah and the Lebanese Army.[90] These will have profound implications in the future regarding the role of the legitimate government of Lebanon and the status of the Golan in any future escalation of violence between Israel and Hezbollah. Simply put, it will create new moral asymmetries that Israel will have to confront. Thus, if there are any lessons to be pulled from the Second Lebanon War it is that hybrid threats evolve and change relative to their context, and we must prepare to rethink and reassess ourselves within the same context. What we can specifically learn about the tactics and organization of Hezbollah from the Second Lebanon War is already obsolete. The next war in Lebanon between Hezbollah and Israel will not simply resemble a more intense version of the 2006 war.

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[89] Michael Slackman, "Hezbollah Chief Leads Huge Rally," *New York Times*, September 22, 2006, accessed on March 20, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/22/world/middleeast/23lebanoncnd.html

[90] Avi Issacharoff, "All is not quiet on Israel's northern frontier," *Times of Israel*, February 17, 2017, accessed March 20, 2017, http://www.timesofisrael.com/all-is-not-quiet-on-the-northern-front/

The Second Lebanon War remains important because of how and why it changed our perceptions of Hezbollah as an organization and as a military threat. While the West looked towards the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Palestinian Second Intifada, Hezbollah continued to evolve, learn, and develop relative to their adversary Israel. Enjoying the continued sponsorship of both Iran and Syria, and further legitimized by the blending of Lebanese nationalism and Iranian Shiite revolutionary ideology, Hezbollah arranged a unique operational system to enable their strategic purpose of resistance and defiance against Israel at that particular time and place. Hezbollah likewise demonstrated a tactical proficiency that came as a surprise to anyone who mistakenly assessed Hezbollah as a simple guerilla force in the image of Hamas or the PLO. Hezbollah's ability to break the Western conceptual mold of an irregular military force made it a natural focus for the relatively recent conceptualizations of hybrid warfare and hybrid threats.

In reflecting on the Second Lebanon War, it is important to remember that the operational forms and tactical capabilities employed in southern Lebanon were fundamentally unique to Hezbollah, and based upon Hezbollah's contextual orientation within the dynamic ideological, societal, and physical ecology of Lebanon, the Levant, and the Middle East. This, in turn, informed Hezbollah's self-conceptual framing of time, space, and purpose. The hybrid nature of Hezbollah's military operations emerged organically from this cognitive depth. Hezbollah demonstrated far more nuance than a neat overlap of state and non-state organizations through its evolution from an Islamic Revolutionary militia into its hybridization as a Lebanese nationalist, global Shiite, and Islamic revolutionary political-military organization engaged in a persistent conflict with Israel since 1982. Merely acknowledging Hezbollah's state and non-state characteristics does very little to aid in understanding them an adversarial or rival system. The term hybrid itself implies that the concept defies prescribed models for application and understanding. Every new hybrid threat will, in effect, represent a new expression of the

phenomenon, and, unless we are careful, pre-defined models and conceptualization may lead us astray.

The Second Lebanon War also offers a new way to understand the broader Israeli-Hezbollah conflict as a gray zone conflict. It represents an ongoing continuum of conflict between two adversaries that features a broad spectrum of military operations in time and space. The discussion on gray zone conflicts, like hybrid warfare, tends to generate observations asking what is truly new about gray zone conflicts. These questions perhaps miss the point. The issue is not if they represent something new, but that they are a reminder to actively reflect on where we fit within these gray zones and how it is changing. Gray zones do not imply a single shade of gray; our positions within them (and those of the adversary) are dynamic, and the gray zone conflict between Israel and Hezbollah cautions us to reflect on this. Overall, the IDF failed to appreciate that the shades of gray darkened decidedly during the Second Lebanon War. As BG Hirsch observed, NORTHCOM and GHQ remained mired in their mindset of routine and well-managed "battle days" with Hezbollah for several weeks before accepting large maneuvers against them were necessary. NORTHCOM and GHQ saw containment and border operations, while the 91st Division saw a new, decisive action environment. Furthermore, given both the physical and cognitive dimensions of hybrid warfare, final termination criteria for such wars fought in gray zones are elusive and likely differ greatly between adversaries. As already discussed, Hezbollah's compliance with the ceasefire put forth in UNSCR 1701 did not terminate their existence or change their fundamental purpose of resistance or role as an Iranian proxy, it merely created a new reality and orientation within the conflict. Therefore, it is helpful to understand hybrid warfare and hybrid threats in conjunction with gray zone conflicts. The nature of gray zone conflicts can tell us something about how hybrid threats operate in time and space, and their orientation within the continuum of war and peace will inform their operational logic in warfare. Hezbollah operated differently as a revolutionary militia in the 1980s during the

Lebanon Civil War than it does today in coordination with the Lebanese Army and in support of Syrian Armed Forces of Assad's regime.

Given the inherent uniqueness of hybrid threats and the constructed cognitive and physical depth they operate upon, simple capabilities-based definitions of hybrid warfare will fail to capture the nuance and what is special about each hybrid threat. Conversely, continuously redefining hybrid warfare to fit each new and emergent hybrid threat will only continue to muddy the waters and inhibit our understanding what is important about hybrid warfare and hybrid threats. Therefore, the intrinsic uniqueness found in hybrid warfare makes it imperative that hybrid threats be understood as the systems they are. A systemic understanding of hybrid threats and hybrid operations is the only true way to approach the infinite variation in operational forms of warfare that hybrid threats can potentially create and arrange. Understanding hybrid threats as a system is how we add context and explanation to their behaviors and capabilities. This likewise increases the importance and role that operational design plays for the military operational artist.

Since hybrid threats are emergent and novel, they exist outside of our neat and tidy models and conceptualizations. Hybrid warfare as employed by Hezbollah will not resemble the hybrid warfare as employed by Russia, China, ISIS, or some heretofore unidentified future adversary. Each unique form of hybrid warfare will, however, seek to exploit the asymmetries created by different conceptualizations of time, space, and purpose between rival systems. This insight also makes the case to elevate asymmetry as a fundamental principle of joint operations and/or element of operational design within US Joint and Army doctrine, as all warfare seeks to create and exploit asymmetries. For the operational artist, this also requires sensitivity in perceiving change by constantly asking "what is different?" instead of "how does this fit?" whether it is regarding a form of hybrid warfare or the operational frame in which the artists sees and understands a hybrid threat system. Understanding a hybrid threat system requires understanding how they conceptualize time, space, and purpose and how that informs their strategic purpose and operational logic, it will help tell us what is power and how it is relevant or

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irrelevant to them, and it will help us learn how to interact and effectively arrange our own military operations against them.

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